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ABSTRACT

This book for young readers explores the controversy surrounding the use of languages other than English in education and social settings in the United States. Supporters of the "Official English," or "U.S. English," movement believe that the government and schools should do anything they can to get all Americans to use English at school, at work, and in other public places. Opponents believe that while English is important, other languages have their places in the United States also, and that lawmakers and teachers should encourage recent arrivals to America to keep their native language while they learn English. The case studies of Joe Bernal, legislator and educator, and a proponent of bilingual education, and Linda Chavez, political activist and proponent of English as the tie that binds the nation, illustrate the language controversy. This book explores why the controversy has become so heated and how recent immigrants have coped with the problems of language, cultural heritage, and adjustment to American society. In addition to the debate over the role of bilingual education, there is debate over how bilingual education should be conducted. Research is necessary to determine what works best, and to assure equal education for language minority students. Nine resource organizations are listed, and 33 sources are listed for further reading. (SLD)

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